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New Delhi,  
June 5, 1954.

My dear Mr. Sharrett,

Thank you for your letter of the 21st May which reached me through your Consul in Bombay. Although we have not met, I have endeavoured to follow your activities in Israel, and I was therefore happy to receive your letter.

At the Colombo Conference, the subject of Israel was brought up by the Prime Minister of Pakistan with a view to condemning Israel lock stock and barrel. Some of us were not agreeable and since then much has been said in Pakistan about India not supporting Pakistan in this matter at Colombo.

It was in this connection, a little later, that I had a talk with U Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma. I told him that India recognised Israel about two years ago but that we had not exchanged diplomatic representation. There was no basic objection to this; indeed, normally this follows recognition. But we had felt that we might not be able to serve the cause we have at heart if at this juncture we exchanged diplomatic representation. I am convinced that the problems of Israel and the Arab countries can only be solved by some settlement between them. It is possible that at an appropriate moment, we might be of some service in this matter. But, unfortunately, this whole question is wrapped up in passion and prejudice and it is no easy matter to find a way out. If we established diplomatic relations with Israel at the present juncture, this would not facilitate our task.

This was the general line of our talk. Perhaps, I did not explain myself clearly and U Nu misunderstood me to some extent.

You have quoted in your letter the appropriate and beautiful words of the Song of Songs. Unhappily the world has become much too complicated for these simple and natural approaches.

All good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,

(-) Jawaharlal Nehru

His Excellency  
Mr. Sharrett,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Jerusalem, Israel.